



Success Stories

Washington State Low-Income Weatherization Program

Profiles

Washington Gorge Action Program Bingen, Washington

Katherine was trying her best to maintain the upkeep of the family home. With her young grandchildren staying in her home a large portion of the year, she had serious concerns about their health and safety. She was doing her best to support herself and her family, while dealing with a disability and living on a fixed income. Despite turning her gas furnace off every summer, her utility costs alone were eating up a large portion of her monthly income.

Those utility bills brought her into our office to apply for Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP). She received assistance and also applied for the Weatherization Program. An audit was done on her home to identify what her needs were.

When the auditor completed his assessment of Katherine's home, it was obvious that her

home was in such a state that conservation measures could not be carried out without involving Home Repair and Rehabilitation (HRRP) funds to fix larger issues.

Funds from LIHEAP, Department of Energy, and Energy Matchmakers were used for conservation measures, such as insulating the floors, walls, and attic. Health and Safety measures were also addressed by turning the gas furnace and adding a thermostat, installing fans, and performing interim controls for lead, such as new siding and paint. Home Repair and Rehabilitation funds were used to install all new plumbing for the entire house. New windows and a front door were installed. A new foundation was put in under the kitchen, so that a complete remodel could be done, including new flooring, cabinets, and new energy-saving appliances. The costs for energy conservation measures alone were over \$4,000. The total investment for weatherization and HRRP

services combined was over \$36,000. The improvements to the house added at least 20 years to its life, as well as creating a healthy, safe, and comfortable environment for the homeowner and her grandchildren. Energy measures also contribute to the homeowner's ability to meet her everyday needs. Katherine's utility bills already reflect a substantial savings: 15% savings on her gas bill and 20% savings on her electric bill.

"I don't know what I would have done if WGAP hadn't been able to come and fix my home. I just didn't have the means to do it myself," she says. "I am so grateful!"

The Return on Investment (ROI) is calculated based on current property values in the community for a comparable home around \$180,000, resulting in an ROI ratio of 5:1. for her home."

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